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ABSTRACT

The development of a state-wide master plan to increase volunteerism in the public schools is the purpose of this report. Five phases of implementation are outlined in detail: increasing participants' awareness; training; creating partnerships with homes, businesses, and other organizations; implementation of model programs; and evaluation. Goals to improve student achievement through the more effective use of volunteers include utilizing the resources provided by unpaid staff, enhancing intergroup involvement, and increasing productivity. (LMI)

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FOREWORD

Volunteerism is not a new area of focus for the Utah State Office of Education. Renewed and increased attention was given to this area in 1986 with the Governor's Alert Program which emphasized volunteerism. In addition, one of the goals of the Utah State Board of Education for 1988-1989 is to increase public and parental involvement.

This master plan for volunteerism has been developed with input from various groups and individuals. It has been developed to direct:

I. Activities focused on increasing and enhancing volunteerism across the state
II. Spending and utilization of funds for volunteer expansion
III. Development of school/home/community partnerships
IV. Development of concept papers for the implementation of the various components of the plan

The overall objective for this master plan is to provide a framework for opening the doors of our schools to greater volunteerism, thus increasing the quantity and quality of parental and public involvement.

Respectfully,

James R. Moss
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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MASTER PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE VOLUNTEER SYSTEM

VOLUNTEER MISSION STATEMENT:

To increase student achievement through the more effective use of volunteers. This is supported by the following goals:

1. Capitalize on the resources that can be provided to paid staff by unpaid staff.
2. Improve the school image through improved school/home/community partnerships.
3. Enhance the role of the teacher.
4. Implement independent volunteer-driven programs.
5. Increase the levels of knowledge, experiences, and resources within the classroom through volunteers from all sectors of the community.
6. Achieve greater productivity through increased non-salaried resources.
7. Recognize the changes in society and in today's family structure, and redirect the flow of volunteer resources and activities accordingly.
8. Focus on the home as a base for learning.

PHASE I:

Before a volunteer program can be effective in increasing student achievement, districts, administrators, teachers, and volunteers must be aware of its potential. This can be accomplished by the following:

1. Compile a list of district personnel in charge of volunteers for each district.

   A. Follow-up with a letter telling about the state's plan for volunteerism and volunteer efforts.
   B. Maintain contact with the district person in charge of volunteers.

2. Determine the outcomes of previous training sessions.

   A. Send an evaluation form to each district that participated in training.
   B. Determine which districts have a district volunteer coordinator , a policy concerning volunteers, successful volunteer programs, training, handbooks or other materials.

3. Promote volunteerism and a model of a structured system across the state.

   A. Participate in conference workshops.
   B. Use media as appropriate.
   C. Correspond with each district's public relations officer to inform him/her of the volunteer plan and enlist their cooperation.
   D. Use other means as available.
   E. Provide technical assistance from the State Office to all districts.
   F. Develop a structured system of volunteerism.

4. Conduct a statewide media campaign.

   A. Define a school/home/community partnership.
   B. Stress the importance of improving the partnership, as well as how to make those improvements
   C. Give concrete steps parents and community people can take to work more effectively with schools to increase student achievement.
   D. Outline the benefits of volunteerism to children, to the volunteer, and to education.

5. Develop a trust level between education and community volunteers through improved communication.

6. Interact with other State Office staff members to integrate volunteerism with core curriculum and other programs.

7. Specify in the state guidelines the responsibilities and roles of parents and other community volunteers in the development of programs at the local level, such as Career Ladders.

8. Obtain a policy from the State Board of Education regarding the role of volunteerism in Utah's schools.

PHASE II:

Once schools and districts become aware of the possibilities volunteer programs could have for enhancing education, training must be given in: (1) how to set up effective systems for volunteerism, (2) how to work with volunteers, (3) how to work with businesses, and (4) the roles and responsibilities of the volunteer coordinators in the schools and the districts. This can be accomplished by:

1. Participating in training sessions which would be under the direction of the USOE and follow the steps of the structured system for volunteerism.

2. Creating, collecting, updating, organizing, and having available materials that will assist districts in implementing a volunteer program.

   A. Materials must follow guidelines and requirements as set forth by the USOE.
   B. Materials can be videos, workbooks, program outlines, etc.

3. Acting as a resource in training volunteer coordinators and other training activities as needed by districts or local schools.

4. Developing a resource file of how to organize focused programs which will help schools organize a volunteer system to enrich student education.

5. Helping schools develop a working plan for increased involvement with the homes, businesses, and other groups in their communities.

6. Functioning as a networking process to gather, organize, and share ideas, information, and programs being used by various districts and states in their volunteer programs.

7. Facilitating the implementation of a district-level volunteer coordinator in each district.

8. Compiling a list of volunteer activities within each district to be used as exemplary models.

9. Developing a task force composed of Project Assistance staff, representatives from Higher Education, and USOE Certification staff.

PHASE III:

Building partnerships, networks, and coalitions with homes, businesses, and other organizations would enhance education through financial means, as well as increased human resources, knowledge, and varied experiences. This would be accomplished by:

1. Providing training for districts on how to build business partnerships.

2. Working on a statewide basis to promote partnerships with schools, business and other organizations.

3. Establishing a file of potential business partners for rural and urban areas that would be available to schools across the state, not just those in more heavily populated areas. Included in the resource file:

   A. Information on the volunteer organizations and copies of materials they produce.
   B. Information on school-initiated and school-based programs that provide and bring about a closer school/home/community relationship.
   C. Information on private sector initiatives or programs that promote and effectuate business/school partnerships.
   D. Information on individuals who provide capacity-building training for effective school/home/community partnerships.
   E. Books and other publications that cover topics pertaining to school/home/community partnerships.

4. Implementing a statewide process to facilitate and reward the formation of business and school partnerships.

5. Designing programs that would utilize the home as a base for learning.

6. Designing a program to attract, reorient, reward, and utilize, in a mutually beneficial way, the many excellent educators who have recently retired in Utah.

7. Identifying and interacting with key individuals who are responsible for the most successful school/home/community partnership efffforts in the state and nation.

8. Formulating and activiating a representative and highly influential Partnership Steering Committee which would identify the role and function of such a committee.

PHASE IV:

Expansion of the volunteer system would include the implementation of model programs in local schools that would demonstrate:

1. The latest techniques and thinking on paid and non-paid differentiated staffing, as well as full consideration of the characteristics, lifestyles, and resources of Utah's diverse communities.

2. The impact of volunteerism under the unique conditions of rural and more isolated areas of the state where business and industry involvement are less feasible.

3. The application of the most appropriate teaching and management electronic aids, i.e., computers, distance learning, etc.

4. New differentiated staffing patterns (paid and non-paid) in the public schools.

5. The role of the home and community in general in the learning/achievement process.

6. Step-by-step implementation of focused programs.

7. School/business partnership programs. Businesses would be involved in at least four ways:

   A. Help get the message of the importance of a school/home/community partnership to their employees via in-house newsletters, volunteer coordinators, and other awareness activities.
   B. Underwrite some advertising and material production costs.
   C. Form partnerships with local schools and school districts.
   D. Provide some of the funding for recognizing outstanding schools that have home/community partnerships functioning; and for providing incentive grants to those schools which, with some help, could become exemplary school/home/community partnership schools.
   E. Demonstrate the effective usage of computer software in the reporting system and ultimate determination of the cost-effective ratio of the volunteer program.

8. Business involvement in providing recognition and rewards (financial and other), providing incentives to schools willing to become model/exemplary schools, and forming mutually beneficial school and business partnerships.

9. The role of volunteerism in the identification and development of Utah model school programs.

PHASE V:

Evaluation preparatory to, and during phases I, II, and III, would determine how effective the structured volunteer system is in meeting the challenges set forth in the mission statement of increasing student achievement. The following steps would be needed in Phase IV:

1. Work with the evaluation and assessment staff of the State Office of Education to develop a bench mark system to evaluate the current activities in volunteerism and to act as a base for further evaluation.

2. Develop an evaluation process to be used to evaluate volunteer systems within individual schools and districts on an ongoing basis.

3. Conduct an intensive study of schools which have been identified as being the most effective schools in the area of volunteerism.

   A. Produce materials that can be shared with all interested parties.
   B. Create in-servicing capabilities for other schools.

4. Determine as part of a formative evaluation process :

   A. What areas need improvement.
   B. What programs are working well.
   C. What additional materials may need to be developed.
   D. To what degree and in what ways does student achievement become increased.

5. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the volunteer program at selected model sites.

6. Conduct a summative evaluation rooted in the original bench mark system at the end of two to three years .

7. Present results of the evaluation to the State Board of Education.

8. Improve and develop future volunteer programs using the results obtained.

Concept papers will be the mechanism for the implementation of the various components of the Volunteer Master Plan.

THE MASTER PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING
A STATEWIDE VOLUNTEER SYSTEM

has been prepared by the

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